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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council extends mandate of United Nations Observer Group in Central America for further six months, until 7 November.

- Office of United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator reports at least 125,000 dead in Bangladesh cyclone.

- Secretary-General and Co-Chairmen of Paris Conference on Cambodia welcome acceptance by all parties concerned of cease-fire at least until meeting scheduled for early June in Jakarta with Supreme National Council.

- United Nations Children's Fund Executive Board appeals for international assistance to children affected by Bangladesh cyclone, cholera, Gulf crisis, Chernobyl accident and AIDS, among other things.

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The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) for another six months, until 7 November.

By its unanimous decision, the Council noted the need to continue to monitor expenditures carefully during the current period of increasing demands on peace-keeping resources.

In a report to the Council dated 29 April, the Secretary-General proposed that the Group be reduced from 187 military observers to a total of 130, and that the Central American countries provide rent-free office space to the Group to cut costs.

The ONUCA has been in the area since March 1989 to verify the Esquipulas II Agreement -- a peace plan agreed upon by the Presidents of the five Central American countries, of Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Costa Rica.

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For information media—not an official record

The death toll in the Bangladesh cyclone catastrophe has reached 125,000, according to a report yesterday by the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO). The agency said the official casualty figure was predicted to increase further, because information was still coming in from isolated and inaccessible areas.

The UNDRO said an estimated 2 million survivors were in immediate need of drinking water and dry food. With the passing of each hour, their lives were at stake unless massive measures were taken to at least supply adequate drinking water. The agency said the World Health Organization (WHO) had issued an urgent appeal for $3 million for items needed in the health sector for relief for 650,000 people.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and the two Co-Chairmen of the Paris Conference on Cambodia -- the Foreign Ministers of France and Indonesia -- have welcomed the voluntary cease-fire accepted by the parties in the conflict.

They said in a statement today that they were gratified that the appeal they made on 22 April for a temporary cessation of hostilities in Cambodia, at least until the meeting they had proposed to hold with the members of the Supreme National Council in Jakarta, was accepted by all parties.

They said they considered the cease-fire a sign of the commitment by the parties concerned to reach a positive result at the Jakarta meeting, scheduled for early June.

They said they had decided to send a team to the area to make an on-the-spot review of the situation. The team, to be led by Major-General Timothy Dibuama, Military Adviser to the Secretary-General, was expected to begin its review by the end of this week.

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The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), concluding a two-week session last Friday, 3 May, approved programme budget expenditures of some $573 million in general resources and about $800 million in supplementary funding for programme cooperation in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean. The expenditures also cover interregional and other programmes.

Among the resolutions approved on Friday were appeals to the international community to help alleviate the effects of the cyclone in Bangladesh, and a request to the Executive Director to work to reduce the suffering of the women and children affected.

By a text on the fight against cholera, the Board urged that the Executive Director continue using his good offices to obtain funds to reach the emergency request of $2 million for treatment of victims of cholera and

other measures to stop the spread of the disease. The Executive Director was urged, in another resolution, in consultation and cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), to develop a strategy to combat the spread of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Under a text on victims of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the Board urged the Executive Director to consider possible technical and other special assistance to children and mothers living in the most affected areas.

The Board also called for accelerated programme implementation and emergency responses in Middle East and North African countries and in Djibouti, where child survival, protection and education programmes had been undermined by the effects of the Gulf crisis on families.

By a resolution on Central and Eastern Europe, the Board decided to maintain an amount of $1 million a year to be spent in support of data collection on the situation of children and women in that region.

In a closing statement, Lisbet Palme (Sweden), Chairman of the Executive Board, said insufficient attention had been paid to the environment, adding that "a healthy child cannot survive and develop in an unhealthy environment".

James P. Grant, UNICEF's Executive Director, said the secretariat regarded the Board's reluctance and reservations on the budgetary and staffing proposals as a challenge for the agency to innovate, streamline and to do more with less. He believed that the proposals reflected genuine commitment and prudent budgeting and represented important elements in the quality of UNICEF's capacity for the 1990s.

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